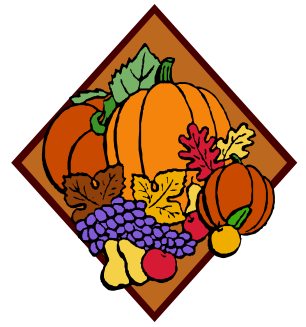


HRO HIGHLIGHTS and TRAINING NOTES



Human Resources Office

<http://amp.nrl.navy.mil/code1800/>

November 2001



Important Employee Action Items

Human Resources Service Center Northeast (HRSC-NE) Contacts

(See Page 11 for details)

FEHB Open Season
Nov. 12 – Dec. 10, 2001

TSP Open Season
Nov. 12, 2001 – Jan. 31, 2001

CFC
Runs until Nov. 17

**Date by which use or lose leave
must be taken**
Jan. 12, 2002

**Date by which use or lose leave
must be scheduled in order to
apply to have lost leave restored**
Nov. 30, 2001

Announcement of Awards
(See Page 10 for details)

Upcoming Training Dates
(See Page 12 for details)

HRO HIGHLIGHTS ON THE WEB
at [http://personnel1.nrl.navy.mil/
highlightsweb/](http://personnel1.nrl.navy.mil/highlightsweb/) or link from
Pipeline

Give the Gift of Leave or Life

*Employee Relations
Code 1850*

While you are spending this time giving thanks for the health and well being of your loved ones, please consider that others haven't been so fortunate. NRL employees listed below have been approved to receive annual leave donated under NRLINST 12630.1a, Voluntary Leave Transfer Program, based on a medical or family emergency. (ONR employees may contact the ONR Human Resources Office for information on eligible ONR employees.). A separate article summarizes how you can donate leave to Government workers affected by September 11 events.

And keep in mind that you are entitled to 7-days excused absence each calendar year to serve as a bone marrow donor and 30 days to serve as an organ donor. When in excused absence status, you receive full pay with no charge to your own leave. If the 7 and 30-day periods are insufficient to cover the necessary time, contact your servicing Employee Relations Office.

NRL Leave Recipients

- Brenda Turner, Code 5001, has been sick for over 4 years with hepatitis C from a blood transfusion.
- Patricia Musser, Code 3521, is suffering from complications from insulin dependent diabetes.

Continued...

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Give the Gift of Leave or Life

Continued...

- Allan Bracker, Code 6876, is caring for a sick family member.
- Jessica Diaz, Code 5710, is on bed rest due to maternity reasons.

Other approved recipients are:

- Dawn Brandel, Code 8012
- Lisa Bradley-Parker, Code 8202
- Denise Stewart, Code 8202
- Micaela Keeley, Code 1800A
- Karen Nicholson, Code 6860
- Tamara Myers, Code 8150

Of course, not all leave recipients are unfortunate:

Stephanie Winegar, Code 6730, is recovering from childbirth, and caring for her newborn.

You may make a TSP election this open season if your latest appointment is under the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) or the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). This is true whether or not you recently made a TSP election associated with your appointment. Election to terminate contributions may be made at any time. If you elect to terminate your contributions during an open season, you may elect to resume contributions during the next open season. However, if you elect to terminate contributions outside an open season, you may not resume contributions until the second open season following the termination.

Beginning with this open season, and **at anytime** thereafter, you may allocate your **future** contributions among any of the **five** investment Funds: the Government Securities Investment (G) Fund, the Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund, the Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund, the Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment (S) Fund and the International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund.



Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season

The TSP open season runs from November 15, 2001 through January 31, 2002. During this time, eligible employees may begin contributions, change the over-all amount of contributions deducted from their paycheck, or terminate their contributions without losing the right to resume contributions the next open season. You can do this by completing an Election Form, TSP-1, and submitting it to the Human Resources Service Center. (See HRSC Contacts article for address and warning that use of the NRL mail service could cause your election to be untimely.) If your election form is received by January 11, your election will be effective January 13. If received later, the effective date will be the first day of the first full pay period after receipt. You may obtain TSP-1s from the following website <http://www.tsp.gov/>, or NRL-DC Forms Supply Store; SSC Mail Room; the Administrative Officer at Monterey; and ONR Administrative Offices.

An interfund transfer is the movement of some or all of your existing account balance among the G, F, C, S, and I Funds. You may move all or part of the money in your account from one fund to any other fund or funds. If you are a FERS employee, this includes your agency contributions and their earnings, even if you have never contributed your own money to your account. **An interfund transfer is different from a contribution allocation because the interfund transfer involves only money that is already in your account. It does not change the way new contributions are allocated to the five funds.**

A contribution allocation or an interfund transfer request must be made directly with the TSP through their website, the ThriftLine, or by using their new Investment Allocation Form, TSP-50. Since the TSP-50 is a laser-sensitive form, you cannot use web version or Xerox copies. You may obtain TSP-50s from any of the locations listed above except the website.

The TSP processes contribution allocations daily and your contribution allocation request will generally be effective no later than 2 business days after it is received. Interfund transfers are processed monthly after accounts have been valued; the TSP must receive your interfund transfer request by the fifteenth of the month (or, if the fifteenth is not a business day, the next business day) for the interfund transfer to be effective as of the end of the month.



HRO HIGHLIGHTS

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How to Listen to Someone Who is Hurting

The following was taken from OPM's Handbook on Handling Traumatic Events. It's advice all of us can use at one point or another.



Whenever people face bereavement, injury, or other kinds of trauma, they need to talk about it in order to heal. To talk, they need willing listeners. Unfortunately, many of us shrink from listening to people in pain. We may feel like we have enough troubles of our own, or be afraid of making matters worse by saying the wrong thing.

Sometimes we excuse ourselves by assuming that listening to people who are hurting is strictly a matter for professionals. Professional assistance, although valuable, is no substitute for the caring interest of supervisors, co-workers, friends, and others from the person's normal daily life.

It is natural to feel reluctant or even afraid of facing another person's painful feelings. But it is important not to let this fear prevent us from doing what we can to help someone who is suffering. Though each situation is unique, some guidelines can help make the process easier:

- The most important thing to do is simply be there and listen and show you care.
- Find a private setting where you won't be overheard or interrupted. Don't place a desk between yourself and the person.
- Keep your comments brief and simple so that you don't get the person off track.
- Ask questions that show your interest and encourage the person to keep talking, for example: "What happened next?" or "What was that like?"
- Give verbal and non-verbal messages of caring and support. Facial expressions and body posture go a long way toward showing your interest. Don't hesitate to interject your own feelings as appropriate, for example: "How terrible." "I'm so sorry."
- Let people know that it's OK to cry. Some people are embarrassed if they cry in front of others. Handing over a box of tissues in a matter-of-fact way can help show that tears are normal and appropriate. It's also OK if you get a bit teary yourself.
- Don't be distressed by differences in the way people respond. One person may react very calmly, while another expresses strong feelings. One person may have an immediate emotional response; another may be "numb" at first and respond emotionally later. Emotions are rarely simple; people who are suffering loss often feel anger along with grief. Unless you see signs of actual danger, simply accept the feelings as that person's natural response at the moment. If a person is usually rational and sensible, those qualities will return once their painful feelings are expressed.
- Don't offer unsolicited advice. People usually will ask for advice later if they need it; initially, it just gets in the way of talking things out.
- Don't turn the conversation into a forum for your own experiences. If you have had a similar experience, you may want to mention that briefly when the moment seems right. But do not say, "I know exactly how you feel," because everybody is different.
- Don't say anything critical of the person: "You shouldn't take it so hard." "You're overreacting."
- Don't say anything that tries to minimize the person's pain: "It could be a lot worse." "You're young; you'll get over it."
- Don't say anything that asks the person to disguise or reject his/her feelings: "You have to pull yourself together." "You need to be strong for your children's sake."

These are helpful guidelines, but the most important thing is to be there and listen in a caring way. People will understand if you say something awkward in a difficult situation.

Once you have finished talking, it may be appropriate to offer simple forms of help. Check about basic things like eating and sleeping. Sharing a meal may help the person find an appetite. Giving a ride to someone too upset to drive may mean a lot. Ask what else you can do to be of assistance.

Manager's Handbook on Handling Traumatic Events

The Office of Personnel Management at website <http://www.opm.gov/ehs/pdf/trauma.pdf> maintains a Manager's Handbook on Handling Traumatic Events. Included are chapters on the following subjects, some of which contain information that's good for everyone to know:

- When Tragedy Strikes at Work
- How to Listen to Someone Who is Hurting
- Recovering from the Death of a Co-Worker
- Supervising an Employee with Suicidal Concerns
- Helping an Employee Recover from an Assault
- Managing After a Disaster
- Managing When the Stress Doesn't Go Away
- Workplace Violence: Stopping It Before It Starts
- When Domestic Violence Comes to Work
- Tips for Coping with Extreme Stress



Children's Survivor Annuity Benefits



The law provides survivor annuity benefits for eligible children of deceased Federal employees and annuitants. The annuitant does not elect these benefits, does not pay for the benefits, and cannot prevent the children from receiving the benefits. Children's benefits are payable whether or not an adult survivor is being paid.

To be eligible for benefits a child must be unmarried, under age 18, and must have been dependent on the deceased employee or retiree. A child is dependent on the deceased employee or retiree if he or she is (1) born within wedlock, (2) adopted, (3) a stepchild or recognized child born out of wedlock who lived with the employee or retiree in a regular parent-child relationship, or (4) a recognized child born out of wedlock for whom a judicial determination of support was made or for whom the employee or retiree made regular and substantial contributions.

In addition, an unmarried child age 18 or over and incapable of self-support because of a disability that began before age 18 is eligible, as is an unmarried child who is a full-time student age 18 to 22.

Public Law 104-208 of September 1996 allows the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to restore survivor annuity benefits to children who lost eligibility due to marriage but subsequently divorced while still meeting the other eligibility requirements, discussed above.

A child's annuity is paid to his or her legal guardian if a court has appointed such a person. If there is no legal guardian, payments will be made, at OPM's discretion, to the person who is responsible for the child. When a student beneficiary reaches age 18, OPM will send the payments directly to the student if he or she asks them to do so.

Emergency Leave Transfer Program to Assist Federal Employees Affected by the Events of September 11

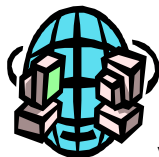
Judy Cabos
Code 1850

As reported in the October Highlights, the President established an Emergency Leave Transfer Program (ELTP) to assist employees affected by the major disasters on September 11. This program is separate from the NRL Voluntary Leave Transfer Program. Under the emergency program, the use of donated leave is not restricted to medical emergencies, and approved leave recipients are not required to exhaust their own accrued annual and sick leave before using donated annual leave. Recipient Federal employees may receive leave donations to fulfill personal needs or to care for a family member affected by the attacks.

NRL employees may donate leave to this program by completing OPM Form 1638. This form and general information on the ELTP can be found on the OPM website at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/leave/index.htm>. In filling out the form, be specific about the number of hours of accrued annual leave to be transferred from your account to the ELTP. One hour is the minimum amount of annual leave that may be donated.

Forms should be returned to the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy. The mailing address is: ODASN, DP2, Nebraska Avenue Complex, 321 Somers Court NW, Suite 40101, Washington, DC 20393-5451. Forms may also be returned via email to grimsley.Lydia@hp.navy.mil, or faxed to 202-764-0788.

What's New on the Employee Relations Website



Jan Walker
Code 1850

Employees and supervisors can benefit from checking out the Employee Relations menu at website <http://amp.nrl.navy.mil/code1800/ERMENU.htm>.

By clicking on *Training*, employees and supervisors can:

- Access important announcements
- Link to NRL Highlights and Training Notes
- Link to internal and external sources of training
- Link to long-term training information and procedures
- Link to training forms and enrollment procedures
- Link to the NRL Mentor Program site.

The *Mentor Program* site provides an overview of program objectives and history, tips for actual or potential mentors and mentorees, and application forms and procedures.

The following are some new additions to the Health/Life Insurance, Dispute Resolution, and Absence/Leave pages:

Portability of Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)
Children's Survivor Annuity Benefits
Dealing with Difficult People
Avoid Dirty Fighting
Dealing with Sexual Harassment
FMLA Application Memo
FMLA Medical Certification Form

Links to the National Clearinghouses for Alcohol/Drug and Mental Health Information have been added to the Drug Free Workplace Program and Counseling Services pages. The Department of Navy's Schedule of Disciplinary Offenses and Remedies has been added to the Disciplinary Actions page.

Voluntary Retirement Contributions

If you are covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or CSRS Offset and you want to receive a larger annuity than would be payable based on your length of service and high-3 average salary, you may make voluntary contributions to purchase an additional annuity. However, if you owe a deposit (for period when you worked for the Federal Government, but were not covered by a retirement system) or redeposit (for monies you withdrew from the retirement system) for civilian service, you will be eligible to make voluntary contributions only after the deposit or redeposit is paid. If you are covered by the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS), you are not eligible to make voluntary contributions.

Voluntary contributions must be made to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in multiples of \$25. Total contributions may not exceed 10% of the total basic pay you received during all of your Federal creditable civilian service. The 10% limit is based on your basic pay received, not projected.

Voluntary contributions earn you an additional annual annuity of \$7 for each \$100 in your voluntary contributions account plus \$.20 for each full year you are over age 55. If you decide to purchase an additional annuity with your voluntary contributions, you can elect an annuity reduction to purchase survivor benefits for any person related or unrelated to you. Voluntary contribution annuities are not increased by cost of living adjustments.

Tax-deferred interest is paid on your voluntary contributions account at a variable interest rate set by the Department of Treasury. The interest rate for 2001 is 6.375 percent. The interest credited to your voluntary contributions account is compounded annually on December 31 of each year.



You may receive a refund of all of your voluntary contributions plus earned interest at any time before you retire and receive an additional annuity. If refunded prior to age 59, the tax-deferred interest is generally reduced by a 10% early distribution penalty. There are some exceptions to this rule.

If you have exceeded the 41 years 11 months of creditable civilian service necessary to earn the 80% maximum optional retirement annuity, you can purchase a voluntary contribution annuity with your refunded excess retirement contributions.

If you would like to know more about this subject, you may obtain a copy of OPM's Retirement Facts, Pamphlet No. 10, Voluntary Contributions (RI 83-11), from OPM's website at <http://www.opm.gov/retire/html/library/csrs.html> and a Standard Form 2804 (Application to Make Voluntary Contributions) from OPM's website at <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/sf.htm>; or you may obtain both from the following locations:

NRL-DC
Forms Supply Store
Bldg. 222, Rm. 174

NRL-SSC
Facilities (Mail Room)
Bldg. 1007, Rm. 37

NRL-MRY
Administrative Office
Bldg. 702, Rm. 216

ONR
Administrative Offices

Completed applications should be mailed to the Department of the Navy, Human Resources Service Center, Northeast (HRSC-NE), ATTN: Benefits, Code 51.1, 111 South Independence Mall East, Philadelphia, PA 19106-2598.

Keeping A Healthy Trust Alive

*Ralph Surette, Ph.D.
Counseling & Referral
Psychologist*

A durable trust in one's self, one's work, one's workplace and one's mission can be easily diminished, damaged or even destroyed by trauma and tragedy. Here are a few guidelines to assist in sustaining or restoring a healthy trust in the work place.

- Come to work with a determination to sustain a positive attitude
- Support the vision and the mission of the Navy and Department of Defense
- Work at maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships while at work, avoiding isolating, blaming, or denying that problems exist
- Be open to accepting change, such as security delays
- Communicate openly and honestly your concerns, anxieties and feelings
- Treat your co-workers with dignity and respect
- Ask for and give an ear to empathetic and compassionate validation of feelings, as we are all in this together.



**Thanksgiving Day
November 22**

Your Right to Federal Records



Jan Walker
Code 1850

The General Services Administration and Department of Justice maintain a joint publication, "Your Right to Federal Records - Questions and Answers on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act." It guides you in exercising your rights and is available at the following website <http://www.usdoj.gov/oip/>. Following are some excerpts:

The Privacy Act establishes controls over how executive branch agencies gather, maintain, and disseminate personal information. (See NRLINST 5211.2E of March 17, 2000; all employees received a copy.) It also can be used to access information. For example, if you were ever in the military or employed by a federal agency, there should be records of your service. If you have ever applied for a federal benefit or received a government-guaranteed student loan, you are probably the subject of a file. There are records on every individual who has ever paid income taxes or received a check from Social Security or Medicare.

The Privacy Act applies to executive branch records only if they are in a "system of records," which means they are retrieved by an individual's name, social security number, or some other personal identifier. This Act guarantees three primary rights: (1) to see records about yourself, subject to the Act's exemptions; (2) to amend that record if it is inaccurate, irrelevant, untimely, or incomplete; and (3) to sue the government for violations of the Act, including permitting others to see your records, unless specifically permitted by the Act.

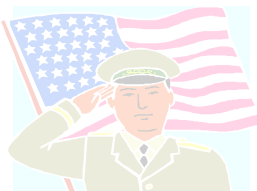
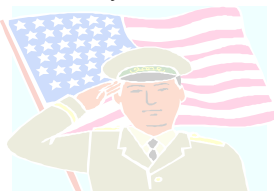
Privacy Act exemptions allow agencies to withhold certain kinds of information from you. Examples are records containing classified information and those concerning criminal investigations. Another exemption is that which protects information that would identify a confidential source. For example, if an investigator questions a person about your qualifications for federal employment and that person agrees to answer only if his identity is protected, then his name or any information that would identify him can be withheld.

Requesting Information about Other People. The Privacy Act's access rights are given only to the individual who is the subject of the records sought; the FOIA's access rights are given to "any person." Under FOIA, you can request information about other people, but it might be withheld to protect their personal privacy. This includes, for example, almost all of the information in medical and financial benefit files and much of the information in personnel files. Another exemption similarly protects personal privacy interests in law enforcement records. Neither exemption can be used to deny you access to information about yourself, only to deny you information about other persons. To decide whether to withhold information, an agency must balance personal privacy interests against any public interest that would be served by disclosure.

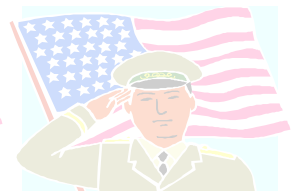
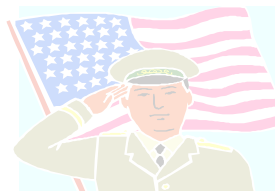
OPM Projects The 2002 Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) Premiums Will Increase Less Than Most

According to an OPM press release, nationwide reports indicate that some private companies are facing health insurance premium increases of 13.50 and many estimate they will increase employees' share of the burden to pay for health insurance next year. While the Government is seeing its own premium increase, the FEHBP remains among the most reasonably priced program in the nation. Reflecting industry trends, the overall average FEHBP increase will be 13.30 percent. The new premiums go into effect in January 2002. Enrollees who have self-only coverage will pay roughly \$4.32 more biweekly, while those with family coverage will pay roughly \$11.57 more biweekly. Factors contributing to the increase include the utilization of prescription drugs and medical services, advances in medical technology and a covered population that continues to age. These are consistent with trends seen elsewhere. 2002 premium rates can be accessed at website <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/02rates/index.htm>.

Social Security Numbers. The Social Security Administration (SSA) has dropped the first five digits of your Social Security (SS) number on your SS statement to protect you from identity theft in case your statement is stolen. SSA advises that identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in this country. A bandit's tools are your SSN and your date of birth. Armed with them, a thief can obtain credit cards, bank accounts and cell phones. All of this would be in your name. The damage could run into enormous amounts of money and take you years to restore your identity and credit. **Always safeguard your SS number.**



**Veteran's Day
November 11**



Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) In-Service Withdrawals

If you are a TSP participant and still employed by the Federal Government you can withdraw funds from your account for two purposes:

- Age-based in-service withdrawals for participants who are age 59 ½ or older, or
- Financial hardship in-service withdrawals for participants who can document financial hardship.

When you take an in-service withdrawal, you cannot return or repay the money you remove from your account, so you permanently deplete your retirement savings and future earnings on the amount withdrawn.

You may obtain the required withdrawal forms and booklet, *TSP In-Service Withdrawals*, from the TSP website located at <http://www.tsp.gov/>, the Human Resources Service Center, Northeast (HRSC-NE) or by contacting the TSP Service Office on (504) 255-6000. You can also obtain them from the following locations:

NRL-DC forms store, Building 222, Room 174

NRL-SSC, Building 1007, Room 37

NRL MRY Administrative Office, Room 216

ONR Administrative Offices

All forms should be submitted to the TSP Service Office, National Finance Center, P.O. Box 61500, New Orleans, LA 70161-1500.



How Leave Without Pay Affects Your Government Benefits

Code 1850

Leave Without Pay (LWOP) is a temporary absence from duty in a nonpay status. It may be granted at your request; approval is usually a matter of administrative discretion. If approved, LWOP affects your Government benefits in the following ways: *Note: Exceptions may apply to reservists called to active duty. Check with your administrative officer.*

Service Computation Date (SCD):

The SCD is a cumulation of Federal service that the Government uses to determine your leave accrual rate, retirement eligibility, etc. In any calendar year, LWOP for six months or more affects your SCD; no service credit is given for time in excess of six months. An exception is LWOP taken due to military service or compensable job injury.

Annual and Sick Leave: At the point you accumulate 80 hours of LWOP, none of the leave you otherwise would have earned in that pay period will be credited to your leave accounts. Plus, you will not earn any more leave until you return to a pay status.

Life Insurance: During and up to 12 months in a non-pay status, your basic and optional life insurance continues at no cost to you. The 12 months may be continuous or broken by periods of less than 4 consecutive months in a pay status. (If, after a period of non-pay status, you receive some pay in each pay period for at least 4 consecutive months, the 12-month period starts over.)

After 12 months in a nonpay status, your insurance will be terminated. In that event, your options include 1) converting to an individual policy and 2) porting your Option B coverage.

Porting is possible if you had Option B coverage for 5 years immediately preceding this point, or from your first opportunity to enroll; you may continue the highest number of multiples that meet the 5 year/first opportunity requirement. Ported coverage can be arranged at your normal cost plus a small monthly administrative fee.



Terminated coverage is restored automatically at the time you re-enter a pay and duty status in a position that is subject to life insurance benefits. The break in coverage does not affect your eligibility to continue your coverage at retirement.

Health Insurance: You may continue health insurance coverage for up to 12 months while you are in a non-pay status. However, you are responsible for payment of the employee share of the cost of enrollment for every pay period during which the enrollment continues. After 12 months, your coverage is terminated and you may convert to non-group coverage.

Thrift Savings Plan: If you are in a nonpay status for an entire pay period, neither you nor your agency can make contributions for that pay period. Further, you cannot make up the missed contributions when you return to a pay status. Under the TSP loan program, loan payments may only be made through payroll allotments. Consequently, when you are in a nonpay status, you are not eligible to receive a TSP loan until you return to a pay status. Because loan payments can only be made through payroll deductions you cannot make payments while in a nonpay status. If you cannot repay your loan within your loan payment schedule, it may have to be extended. TSP loans must be repaid by specific deadlines.



Work-Related Injuries and Fatalities – What You and Your Family Need to Know About Your Benefits. This OPM booklet at <http://www.opm.gov/asd/pdf/ri84-002.pdf> summarizes the payments you and your survivors may be eligible to receive.

Health Benefits Open Season



This year's Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) Open Season will run from November 12 through December 10, 2001. During Open Season, eligible employees may change health plans or options. FEHB Plan Comparison Charts and the form for enrolling or changing enrollment (SF-2809) can be obtained from the NRL-DC Forms Supply Store, SSC Mail Room, administrative officers, or from website <http://www.opm.gov>. Log on, select FEHB, and access these and additional information and guides that can help you choose a 2002 health plan.

Check your current health plan's input carefully to determine premium, service area, or benefits changes. Some changes are:

- The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan is merging its High Option into Standard Option and adding a new Basic Option.
- The Postmasters Plan is changing its name to PBP Health Plan and CapitalCare is changing its name to CareFirst BlueChoice, Inc.
- Free State Health Plan and George Washington Health Plan are terminating participation at the end of 2001. Cigna Health Care of Virginia is terminating participation at the end of 2001. If your plan is terminating you must choose a new plan during this Open Season.

Administrative Officers should ensure that all FEHB-eligible division employees, including those absent on leave-without-pay or for other reasons, are made aware of the FEHB Open Season and provided plan comparison charts and forms upon their request.



Open Season elections by NRL employees must be mailed to the Human Resources Service Center. See HRSC Contacts article for address and warning that using the NRL mail service could cause your election to be untimely.

Coverage under a new health plan will be effective January 13, 2002. You will remain covered and receive benefits under your old plan until coverage under the new plan becomes effective.

Compensation for Work-Related Injuries

Roxanne Drake
Code 1850

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) Program provides salary replacement and medical benefits when you are injured at work. The term "injury" applies to either a **traumatic injury** or an **occupational disease or illness**.



A "**traumatic injury**" is a wound or other condition of the body caused by external force, including stress and strain. The injury must be identifiable by time and place of occurrence and member of the body affected; and it must be caused by a specific event or series of events within a single workday or work shift. Examples include cuts, back sprains arising from an event or events occurring on a single day, bee stings, broken bones, and rashes from a one-day exposure to poison ivy.

If you sustain a traumatic injury, you must report the incident on a Form CA-1, "Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation." This form should be completed by you (or someone acting in your behalf), and given to your supervisor as soon as possible, (but not later than 30 days from the date of injury). After completion of the form, send or bring

the form to your servicing Employee Relations Office (ERO). Failure to file the form within the specified timeframe will result in the forfeiture of certain benefits.

An "**occupational disease or illness**" is defined as a condition produced in the work environment over a period longer than one workday or shift. It may result from systemic infection, repeated stress or strain, exposure to toxins, poisons or fumes, or other continuing conditions of the work environment. Some examples include: hearing loss caused by hazardous noise exposure, respiratory disorders caused by long-term exposure to asbestos or toxic fumes, and injuries caused by performing repetitive-motion tasks.



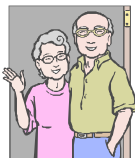
If you are claiming a work-related disease or illness, you must complete Form CA-2, "Federal Employees' Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation," and submit the form to your ERO within 30 days of the date you first realize an illness was caused or aggravated by your employment.

It is important for both the injured employee (or someone acting on his/her behalf), and the supervisor to promptly complete the required paperwork and forward to the ERO in a timely manner. That way, you can expect timely adjudication of your compensation claim.

The EROs employ Injury Compensation Administrators (ICAs), who are responsible for providing you with guidance and assistance on FECA issues and for forwarding your claim forms to the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, U.S. Department of Labor. If you have any questions, NRL employees may call ICA Roxanne E. Drake at (202) 767-6737; email rdrake@hro1.nrl.navy.mil. ONR employees may contact ICA Paula Bright at (703) 696-3633; email brightp@onr.navy.mil.



Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) Overview



The CSRS is a contributory retirement system. Employees share in the expense of the annuities to which they become entitled. You or your survivor is guaranteed at least the amount you contributed to the retirement fund as either an annuity or a lump-sum payment.

Contributions. CSRS covered employees contributed 6.5% of basic pay from October 1956 to December 1969; 7% from January 1970 to December 1998; 7.25% from January 1999 to December 1999; 7.4% from January 2000 to December 2000; and 7.5% from January 2001 to December 2001. You must also pay Medicare tax, currently 1.45% of pay.

Refunds. You may withdraw your contributions if you leave Federal employment. Payment of a refund cancels your right to a deferred annuity. However, if you are later reemployed under the retirement system and establish a new annuity right, you may repay the refund (with interest) and receive credit for the service covered by the refund.

Retirement Options. Below are the categories of retirement benefits:

Type of Retirement	Min. Age	Min. Service (Years)
Optional	62	5
	60	20
	55	30
Early Optional	Any age*	25
	50*	20
Discontinued Service	Any age*	25
	50	20
Disability	Any age	5
Deferred	62	5

*Annuity is reduced by one-sixth of 1% for each full month you are under age 55.

- **Early Optional** – Your agency must be undergoing a major reorganization, reduction-in-force, or transfer of function as determined by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).
- **Discontinued Service** – Your separation must be involuntary and not removal for misconduct or delinquency.
- **Disability** – You must be disabled for useful and efficient service in your current position and any other vacant position at the same grade or pay level within your commuting area and current agency for which you are qualified. (Application must be prior to retirement, or within 1 year of separation, except in case of mental incompetence.
- **Deferred** – You must not have taken a refund at last separation from service.

Survivor Benefits. If you are married when you retire, your annuity will be reduced to provide a full survivor annuity for your spouse (unless he or she consents to a lesser benefit). To provide for a survivor annuity, your annuity will be reduced by 2.5% of the first \$3,600, plus 10% of the annuity over \$3,600. The survivor annuity will be 55% of the amount of your annuity before this reduction. If you die after 18 months of civilian service your widow(er) will get an annuity, provided you were married for a total of 9 months. The 9-month requirement does not apply if your death is accidental or there is a child of the marriage. Generally, your widow(er) is entitled to 55% of the basic annuity earned by your creditable service and average salary. However, if it will produce a higher annuity, your widow(er) will receive 55% of the guaranteed minimum.

Former Spouses. If you have a former spouse from whom you were divorced after May 6, 1985, he or she may receive, by court order, all or a part of the annuity that your widow(er) would otherwise get.

Children. If you have 18 months of civilian service and die while you are an active employee, or if you have retired, your children may be eligible to receive an annuity. This benefit is payable to each unmarried child up to age 18; up to age 22 if a full time student; or, at any age if the child became disabled before age 18.

CSRS Offset Employees. You are a “CSRS Offset” employee if you are one of the employees covered by the CSRS and Social Security at the same time. You will be eligible to receive a CSRS annuity just as if you were covered by CSRS alone, except that the annuity payment will be reduced when you become eligible for Social Security benefits (usually at age 62). The amount of the reduction will be the amount of the Social Security benefit attributable to your service after 1983 that was covered by both CSRS and Social Security. A survivor annuity based on your service will be reduced for any survivor Social Security benefits in the same manner.

For further information on the CSRS, visit the Health/Life Insurance; Retirement/TSP web page at <http://amp.nrl.navy.mil/code1800/-COMPMenu.HTM>.

Caring for Your Parents? One thorny issue is how you and your siblings divide expenses. The sibling who is the primary caregiver, especially if Mom is living at home with him/her, should get a “salary” for the daily work and emotional stress. One way to do this if there are several siblings: The sibling with whom Mom lives pays nothing, and the other siblings chip in the rest.

Can I take out a loan against my Government life insurance? No. Federal Employees Group Life Insurance is term insurance. It doesn't build a cash value. There is nothing for you to borrow against. But if you are terminally ill, you may qualify to receive your Basic life insurance as a Living Benefit.



Announcement of Awards

Nominations for the following awards are due as indicated below to the NRL-HRO, Code 1850, or the ONR Training Branch (exceptions noted). Access the HRO's Performance Appraisal and Awards website at <http://amp.nrl.navy.mil/code1800/PAAwds.htm> for detailed criteria and format, a calendar of other upcoming awards, and other helpful information in this area.

Arthur S. Flemming Awards

Due December 15, 2001



These awards are granted annually by George Washington University. Twelve separate awards are made: four awards in scientific or technical fields; four in administrative or executive fields; and four in information and technology fields. Awards are made to individual government employees who have made outstanding contributions to public service on either a sustained basis or through a single exceptional accomplishment during the previous calendar year. Individuals should have an active participation in community activities (including professional activities where the purpose is not considered self-promoting) as a demonstration of a well-rounded lifestyle.

NRL Award for Excellence in Mission Support

Due January 1, 2002

This award is bestowed on NRL civilian or military employees or teams of employees (in or occupying nonresearch positions) in recognition of significant contributions. Managers may nominate support employees under their supervision and/or support employees who work in other divisions.



Alan Berman Research Publication Awards

Due January 14, 2002

These awards are given annually based on superior technical writing that benefits the Government's research program. Divisions select own winners and forward the selected packages to the Director of Research (Code 1001) by the second week of January.

Institute of Navigation Awards

Due January 15, 2002

These awards are granted by the Institute of Navigation in four categories: **Thurlow Award** (for contributions to the science of navigation, including invention or design of equipment, method(s) developed or research/study); **Hayes Award** (recognizes management officials for outstanding encouragement, inspiration, and support contributing to the advancement of navigation); **Superior Achievement Award** (recognizes contributions to the advancement of navigation, which includes those spanning a period of years or outstanding performance as a practicing navigator during the award year); and **Burka Award** (for outstanding achievement in the preparation of papers contributing to the advancement of navigation and space guidance; the paper must have been published in *Navigation*).

The following award nominations may be submitted at anytime:

Commanding Officer's Award for Achievements in the Field of Equal Employment Opportunity

Any employee may nominate an individual for this award, which recognizes those NRL supervisors/managers and nonsupervisory

employees who have made outstanding contributions to the EEO Program through excellence in their leadership skills, imagination, and accomplishments.

Secretary of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award

The second highest DoD award granted to career civilian employees who have distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious service of major significance to DoD.

Navy Distinguished Civilian Service Award (DCSA)

The highest honorary award that the Secretary of the Navy may confer upon a DoN civilian employee. Bestowal is on a highly selective basis to employees who have distinguished themselves by extraordinary service or contributions of major significance to DoN. **Receipt of this award is an example of recognition considered suitable for inclusion in a CCS distinguished contribution allowance (DCA) nomination.**



Navy Superior Civilian Service Award (SCSA)

The highest honorary award that the Chief of Naval Research may confer on a civilian command employee. This award is granted to recognize superior civilian service or a contribution that has resulted in exceptional values and/or benefits to the DoN.

NRL Award of Merit for Group Achievement

This NRL award may be given at any time for a group contribution comparable to one for which an individual would receive Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Award consideration.

DoN Distinguished Achievement in Science Award (DASA)



Granted to civilians by the Secretary of the Navy to recognize pioneering scientific achievements that are extraordinary and significant in nature and that contain a potential for far-reaching consequence (a "breakthrough"). **Receipt of this award is an example of recognition considered suitable for inclusion in a CCS distinguished contribution allowance (DCA) nomination.**

Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Award (MCSA)

This is the highest DoN award that the NRL Commanding Officer may confer on a civilian employee. This award will be granted to recognize meritorious civilian service or a contribution that has resulted in high values and/or benefits to DoN.

NRL Lifetime Achievement Award



Bestowed on a highly selective basis to a current NRL civilian employee or team for continual and extraordinary achievements in the sciences (or engineering) that contribute substantively to the knowledge and capabilities of the nation and the U. S. Navy during a lifetime as an NRL scientist or engineer.

OPM Updates Retirement Benefits Web Pages Use on-line calculators to compute the tax-free portion of annuity payments, monthly income tax withholding and amount of a deposit for retirement credit. For these and other OPM tools, access <http://www.opm.gov/retire>.

Human Resources Service Center-Northeast (HRSC-NE) Benefits Contacts

Health Insurance Benefits:

Email the Benefits Branch of the HRSC-NE at BENEFITS_NE@ne.hroc.navy.mil, or call Carol Burkett at (215) 408-4431; DSN 243-4431.

Life Insurance/TSP Benefits:

Email to the above address or call Duwanda Chavis at (215) 408-5619; DSN 243-5619.

Retirement Benefits:

Email to the above address or call Ken Bluford at (215) 408-5069; DSN 243-5069; or Marian Trivarelli at (215) 408-5074; DSN 243-5074.

Please note: The HRSC-NE is responsible for providing counseling on benefits. Employees are responsible for mailing their own benefit application, enrollment or change forms to the HRSC-NE at:

Human Resources Service Center-Northeast
Code 51.1
111 South Independence Mall East
Philadelphia, PA 19106-2598

Mailing through the postal service must be done at your own expense - you may not use a government-franked envelope. As an alternative, the NRL Mail Service will forward items via bulk mail. You may: 1) use either a plain or franked envelope or 2) use a messenger envelope addressed to: HRSC-NE, Philadelphia, PA. Be aware that due to pick-up schedules, weekends and holidays associated with the NRL Mail Service, sending documents through that service could delay your transmittal by 1 to 5 days.



LATEST TSP RETURN RATES

Month	C Fund	F Fund	G Fund	I Fund	S Fund
Oct 00	(0.40%)	0.66%	0.51%		
Nov 00	(7.87%)	1.65%	0.48%		
Dec 00	0.50%	1.86%	0.48%		
Jan 01	3.55%	1.65%	0.46%		
Feb 01	(9.12%)	0.87%	0.42%		
Mar 01	(6.33%)	0.51%	0.45%		
Apr 01	7.78%	(0.42%)	0.43%		
May 01	0.65%	0.61%	0.47%	1.42%	(4.13%)
Jun 01	(2.42%)	0.39%	0.47%	0.66%	(3.99%)
Jul 01	(0.98%)	2.22%	0.48%	(1.79%)	(4.13%)
Aug 01	(6.27%)	1.20%	0.45%	(2.58%)	(4.32%)
Sep 01	(8.05%)	1.15%	0.43%	(9.95%)	(12.50%)
Previous 12 Months					
8/2000-9/2001	(26.57%)	13.07%	5.67%	(28.84%)	(34.25%)

Percentages in () are negative.

NRL Human Resources Office Training Information

NRL Training Coordinator: Judy Cabos,
Code 1850

Voice: (202) 767-2365

Fax: (202) 767-1902

Email: jcabos@hro1.nrl.navy.mil

HRO Training Website: <http://amp.nrl.navy.mil/code1800/TRNGMENU.HTM>

ONR Contact for NRL advertised training:
Lasondra Gray, Training Office, 703-696-5054

You are encouraged to improve your skills and knowledge to better meet the needs of our organization and your own growth. The HRO supports this by making you aware of a variety of training sources. We advertise training opportunities on the HRO website, by email and in HRO Highlights. **Our training web site provides links to training forms and procedures, including NRLNOTE 12410 of September 12, 2000, Registration and Payment Procedures for Training.** We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions.

NRL-HRO TRAINING SCHEDULE

To register for NRL sponsored no-cost training, you must submit an NRL In-House Course Nomination Form, HQ-NRL 12410/3, to Code 1850 not later than two weeks prior to the course start date. **To register for training at cost,** you must complete a DD 1556 and follow the guidelines in NRLNOTE 12410. **Remember that you are not enrolled in an NRL-HRO class until you receive confirmation.** To receive confirmation, include on your registration form your current voice and fax number and email address. If you don't receive a confirmation prior to the start of an NRL-sponsored class, contact Judy Cabos. Contractors and military personnel should contact Judy Cabos for further information. **Cancellations** are accepted until two weeks prior to the course start date; cancellations received after that, or no shows, will result in a charge back to the Division for the per person fee.

Long-Term Training Application Deadline

Approved applications for long-term training are due to the HRO, Code 1850 by **February 1, 2002. Applications submitted after that date will not be accepted.** NRL sponsors four programs intended to keep professional employees abreast of advances in their fields or to enable them to take additional job-related graduate courses (not for the purpose of acquiring a degree). The four competitive programs are: the Edison Memorial Graduate Training Program, the Select Graduate Training Program, the Naval Postgraduate School Program, and the Advanced Graduate Research (Sabbatical) Program. Point of Contact for Long-Term Training is Judy Cabos, 767-2365, jcabos@hro1.nrl.navy.mil.



NRL COURSE: Contracting at NRL: The Pre-Award Phase -- DATE CHANGE

Dates/Time/Location/Cost: December 17, 18, 19,
2001/ 8:00 am– 3:00 pm/Bldg. 72, Rm. 120

No cost for NRL employees; per person fee for other employees or no shows is \$450.00

Instructor: Jeff Giancola

Description: This course covers the acquisition process from identification of the requirement through the contract award. It is designed for program officers, requisitioners, Contracting Officer Representatives, and other NRL employees who need to utilize the contracting process to achieve program objectives. Topics include: contracts, grants, interagency and cooperative agreements, Broad Agency Announcements, Small Business Innovation Research, Statement of Work, specifications, preparation of Procurement Information Processing System procurement request package, technical evaluation plan, and competitive and noncompetitive (sole-source) selection procedures.

ALTERNATIVE TRAINING SOURCES

Computational Support Services (CSS), NRL Code 5595

Rapidly changing technology makes learning essential to maintain competencies or to improve job performance.

But employees often find it difficult to set aside the time to attend classroom training. Through CSS alternative training, you can opt for self-paced training at the office, home or other location of your choice. CSS provides NRL and ONR employees and contractors



access to a variety of **no cost** multi-media training material or computer-based training (CBT) to include topics such as project management, programming, human resources, web publishing and more. Available multi-media include VHS video, CD-rom and books with accompanying diskettes. CBT runs on Windows operating systems. If you missed the introductory class offerings, would like to use the CSS computer lab or require assistance, please email Judy Cabos. A complete listing can be viewed at <http://amp.nrl.navy.mil/code5595> by clicking on the left side index Training link.

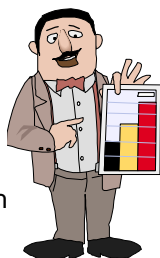
E-Learning Training Source

All Navy civilians, active or retired military or their dependents can now access the courses and links to sites for career development, research and libraries at <http://www.navylearning.com>. The site includes a variety of personal and professional development courses, which may be taken at **no cost** to you or your activity. Check this site periodically for new offerings. Courses may be taken at home or at work with the approval of your supervisor. At the login screen enter the requested information. If you have any difficulty, the Desk/Customer Assistance Center can be reached at (877) 253-7122 (toll free) or DSN 922-1828.



National Independent Study Center (NISC) Correspondence Training

Self-study allows employees to learn at their own pace at any location. In addition, the course materials often become invaluable reference sources after course completion. NISC offers more than 50 courses in English and writing, supervision, financial and project management, mathematics and statistics, human resources management, general skills and other areas. A list of their courses can be accessed through the Graduate School, USDA site (see below) or through a catalog maintained by the HRO. You may call NISC at (303) 236-8525 or email them at nisc@grad.usda.gov.



Graduate School, USDA



The Federal Government's trainer, the Graduate School, USDA, is increasing their Information Technology staff in order to remain current with rapidly changing topics. In addition, they provide affordable, customized solutions to the challenges facing government managers in areas such as leadership, managing human capital, organizational change and knowledge management. Visit their website at

www.grad.usda.gov or call (202) 479-4970. For organizational development services, call Gary Dzurec at (202) 314-3464 or access website www.grad.usda.gov/programs_services/special/orgdev.cfm. The NRL-HRO maintains a catalog.

The Institute for Management Studies (IMS)

IMS conducts one-day seminars each month for the convenient and continuous management and leadership development of mid-level and senior managers. Each seminar is an interactive workshop on a different topic, presented by a different speaker and attended by 60 to 100 senior managers from the federal government and large corporations. IMS speakers are faculty from major university Business Schools or are well-known and respected management consultants. Monthly seminars are held in 21 cities in the US and 5 cities in Europe and Canada. Review the schedule at website www.ims-online.com, click on "Member Services" and then enter the password "navy", and then click on the city of interest. To register, call the IMS chairman listed under each city and then complete a DD Form 1556. Two upcoming courses of interest are listed below.

High-Performance Teams: Maximizing Group Dynamics

November 15, 2001 at Tysons Corner Holiday Inn
Cost \$225

This session explores models for understanding temporary teams and task forces, permanent teams and supervisory groups and virtual or electronic teams. Through discussions and case studies, factors within a group that drive its performance are identified as well as specific actions that can be taken to improve a team's performance. Focus is on how team leaders can improve the way the team works together and builds links with other groups. This session is led by Dr. David Caldwell, Professor of Business at the Leavey School of Business at Santa Clara University. Dr. Caldwell has taught extensively in university management development programs and has had his research published in a variety of academic journals including Administrative Science Quarterly, Journal of Applied Psychology, and the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.



Who quipped, "Training is everything. The peach was once a bitter almond; cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education"?

Mark Twain, American writer and humorist

The Essence of Leadership: Developing Personal Accountability

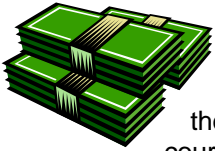
December 7, 2001 at Tysons Corner Holiday Inn

Cost \$225

This seminar deals with the "Question Behind the Question." Have you ever heard questions like, "Who made the mistake?"; "Why doesn't the corporation communicate better?"; "Why do we have to go through all this change?" If you have, come and learn about the QBQ. Since the answers are in the questions, the QBQ is a practical idea that works. QBQ enables each of us to practice personal accountability at work or at home. Mr. John Miller is the facilitator for this seminar. He is a keynote speaker and workshop leader as well as the author of the book *Personal Accountability*. A graduate of Cornell University, he has worked with organizations such as General Motors, State Farm Insurance and Oracle Corporation.



Naval Financial Management Career Center (NFMCC)



The Department of Navy NFMCC conducts the Enhanced Defense Financial Management Course. This 5-day course, provided at **no cost** to individual or activity, is intended to improve the overall technical and managerial capabilities of the DoD financial management workforce. It will be offered in the Washington DC area several times during FY-01. Please visit their website for further information and course schedules at website www.nfmc.navy.mil/edfmc.htm.

NRL Toastmasters Training

Your success in life depends on your ability to verbalize your ideas so they are heard, understood, and acted on. NRL Toastmasters International can help you. Both NRL Clubs have ongoing communications and leadership programs in which members learn by doing in an atmosphere of understanding and friendship. A basic manual is used for the first ten speeches. Twelve additional advanced manuals cover specific areas of communication, such as Technical Presentations, Speaking to Inform, The Discussion Leaders, Speeches by Management and the Entertaining Speaker.



Forum Club

First and Third Tuesdays
of every month
11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
West Dining Room, Cafeteria
Bldg. 28
POC: George Arthur
(202) 767-4389

Thomas Edison Club

Weekly on Thursdays
12 noon to 1 p.m.
Bldg. 207, Rm. 157 (Chemistry)
First Floor, Conference Room
POC: Tom Rodilosso
(202) 404-4106

